

SURVEY OF THE UPTAKE OF SAFETY AUDIT BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Review and Audit Division Report No. RA95/475S

SURVEY OF THE UPTAKE OF SAFETY AUDIT BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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Reviewed by:

Ian Appleton, Safety Audit Manager

Approved by:

Peter Wright, Review and Audit Manager

March 1997

PREFACE

This is a final report.

This report has been prepared for the purposes of assisting Transfund New Zealand to discharge its statutory responsibilities in terms of the Transit New Zealand Amendment Act 1995 and to provide advice to the authorities concerned.

This report provides the results of a survey of all 74 local authorities. While the author has made every effort to ensure that all the responses reflect the situation pertaining in each local authority, there is no guarantee that the survey is complete or current.

As safety audit is further promoted in the local authority sector, the conclusions of this report and any opinions expressed in it may change. Readers of the report should not rely solely on its contents. Readers should seek the most up to date information available.

Note: This survey was commenced prior to the establishment of Transfund New Zealand consequent upon the Transit New Zealand Amendment Act 1995, which came into effect on 1 July 1996.



28 February 1997

(SASRep15.doc)

SAFETY AUDIT SURVEY

(Contract 95 / 13: Survey of the Uptake of Safety Audit by Local Authorities)

1. Introduction

Transit New Zealand wished to establish which Local Authorities or Councils in New Zealand undertake safety audits as part of their road design process. A postal survey was conducted of all 74 Local Authorities and they all completed the questionnaire.

The term 'Safety Audit' has a number of meanings, and in this survey it relates to the safety audit of roading projects, as defined in Transit New Zealand's "Safety Audit Policy and Procedures", published in 1993.

The survey was mailed out in May 1996, prior to the separation of Transit New Zealand into Transit and Transfund. The Transit New Zealand name has been retained throughout the report.

This report summarises the responses to the questionnaire.

2. Population Definition

There are 74 Territorial Local Authorities in New Zealand. Each has responsibility for roading in its area. These councils constitute the population which was investigated. (The Territorial Local Authorities are referred to as 'Councils' in this report.)

3. Survey Method

A questionnaire was sent to all Councils in New Zealand, with a covering letter from the TNZ Safety Audit Manager. A reply paid envelope was included.

The questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the Safety Audit Manager.

2nd Floor, AMI Building, Riccarton Road, Christchurch, New Zealand. P.O. Box 12255, Christchurch. Telephone: (03) 332-2722 Fax: (03) 332-8885 Offices in Wellington and Dunedin

TRANSPORT ENGINEERING, MARKETING AND BUSINESS PLANNING

The questionnaire was tested on three Councils, before being sent to all of them.

After some prompting, a 100% response to the questionnaire was achieved.

4. Who Undertakes Safety Audits

Question 1. Does your Council have safety audits done of road improvements? (Do not count safety audits which Transit New Zealand has initiated.)

Table 1: Numbers of Councils undertaking and not undertaking Safety Audits

Answer	Number	Percent
Do safety audits	25	33.78
Do not do safety audits	49	66.22
Total Councils responding	74	100.00

Seven of the Councils did not answer Question 1, but their answer has been deduced from the remainder of the questionnaire.

The Councils which say they undertake safety audits are shown below, in Table 2.

Table 2: Do Safety Audits

<u></u>	
Auckland	Opotiki
Buller	Rodney
Central Otago	Rotorua
Christchurch	Ruapehu
Clutha	South Waikato
Dunedin	Tauranga
Hamilton	Timaru
Hutt City	Upper Hutt
Invercargill	Waipa
Manawatu	Waitakere
Manukau	Wellington
Matamata Piako	Whangarei
North Shore	

The Councils which do not undertake safety audits are shown below, in Table 3:

Table 3: Do NOT do Safety Audits

Table 5. Do not do Salety Addis			
Ashburton	Kawerau	Stratford	
Banks Peninsula	Mackenzie	Tararua	
Carterton	Marlborough	Tasman	
Central Hawkes Bay	Masterton	Taupo	
Chatham Islands	Napier	Thames Coromandel	
Far North	Nelson	Waikato	
Franklin	New Plymouth	Waimakariri	
Gisborne	Otorohanga	Waimate	
Gore	Palmerston North	Wairoa	
Grey	Papakura	Waitaki	
Hastings	Porirua	Waitomo	
Hauraki	Queenstown Lakes	Wanganui	
Horowhenua	Rangitikei	Western Bay of Plenty	
Hurunui	Selwyn	Westland	
Kaikoura	South Taranaki	Whakatane	
Kaipara	South Wairarapa		
Kapiti	Southland		

5. Responses from those Councils which undertake Safety Audits

5.1 Proportion of Road Improvements Safety Audited

Question 2. What proportion of road improvements and new construction would you estimate are safety audited by your Council?

The distribution of proportions of road improvements safety audited is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Percentage of Projects which are Safety Audited

Percent Safety	Number of
Audited	Councils
100	5
95	1
80	1
75	1
70	2
50	5
45	1
25	1
20	2
15	1
10	4
5	1
Total	25

While about half the projects are safety audited, there is a wide variation in the proportion of projects audited.

The percentages of road improvements safety audited by each Council is shown below in Table 5

Table 5: Percentage of Projects Safety Audited by Council

Council	Reported percent safety audited	Council	Reported percent safety audited
Auckland	50	Opotiki	50
Buller	70	Rodney	10
Central Otago	15	Rotorua	100
Christchurch	20	Ruapehu	50
Clutha	100	South Waikato	. 5
Dunedin	10	Tauranga	20
Hamilton	50	Timaru	100
Hutt City	95	Upper Hutt	75
Invercargill	100	Waipa	100
Manawatu	10	Waitakere	45
Manukau	80	Wellington	10
Matamata Piako	25	Whangarei	70
North Shore	50		

The questionnaires from the Councils which claim all or most projects are safety audited were reviewed. Although they claim they safety audit all or most projects, it is not possible to determine from the questionnaire whether they are being safety audited or just safety checked.

5.2 Who does the Safety Audits

Question 3. Who does the safety audits

Three options were given: Council staff

Other Council's staff

Consultants

Combinations of these groups were permitted in the reply.

The number of responses in each group are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Who undertakes the Safety Audits

Who undertakes the Safety Audits	Number
Council staff	9
Council staff & consultants	6
Council staff, other Council staff & consultants	3
Consultants	7
Totals	25



It can be seen that the largest number of safety audits are done by Council staff. Consultants and consultants with Council staff do about the same proportion of the safety audits.

Details of responses, by Council, are shown in Appendix 2.

5.3 How are projects selected for Safety Audit

Question 4. How are the projects selected for safety audit?

The responses are given in Table 7, below:

Table 7: How projects are selected for safety audit

Response	Number
Projects with a crash history, or for safety reasons	12
Major projects	6
Staff judgement	6
All projects	3
Randomly selected	2
Minor projects	1
All new projects	1
All TNZ subsidised projects	1
	32

Almost forty percent of the reasons given by the twenty-five Councils which undertake safety audits suggest that safety audit are undertaken when there is a safety problem. Major projects, and those selected by staff were the next most common reasons.

Some Councils gave more than one reason, resulting in the total being 32 instead of 25.



5.4 Are TNZ standards followed

Question 5. Are the Transit New Zealand procedures ("Safety Audit Policy and Procedures", 1993) used for your safety audits?

Table 8 Use of TNZ Procedures by Council Name

Council	Use TNZ standards?	Council	Use TNZ standards?
Auckland	Yes	Opotiki	Yes
Buller	No	Rodney	Yes
Central Otago	Yes	Rotorua	No
Christchurch	Yes	Ruapehu	No
Clutha	Yes	South Waikato	Yes
Dunedin	Yes	Tauranga	Yes
Hamilton	Yes	Timaru	No
Hutt City	Yes	Upper Hutt	Yes
Invercargill	Yes	Waipa	Yes
Manawatu	Yes	Waitakere	Yes
Manukau	Yes	Wellington	No
Matamata Piako	Yes	Whangarei	Yes
North Shore	Yes		

All but five of the 25 Councils follow the Transit New Zealand procedures.

Question 6. If 'No', what procedures do you use?

One Council responded: "Informal process by checking plans and carrying out site inspection".

Another said the TNZ procedures are 'used as a guide. Most projects are small shape corrections or seal extensions which are built to a price to obtain a B/C'

Yet another Council said that they used the collective input from Council staff and through consultation with others.

Several others said they used other check lists as well.



5.5 Why are not all projects safety audited

Question 7. What prevents your Council from safety auditing all its roading projects?

Table 9: Reasons for not Safety Auditing All Roading Projects

Response	Number
Resources or cost	14
Time	8
Projects too small	4
Lack of appreciation of the importance of safety auditing	2
No projects or suitable projects	1
Delays the project	1
Only SA seal extensions. Assume 'black spot' studies cover	1
rest	
Consent process does not allow	1
Only do major projects	1
It is a new concept	1
Other Council Departments also do roading	1
Lack of incentive and Council policy	1
The Provider / Adviser model does not help	1
	37

The reasons given by fourteen of the Councils was that time and staff resources were the limiting factor. Cost was also a major factor.

One Council suggested that "Lack of appreciation by some of importance of audit process" was a factor. Another suggested that they audited all but the least important projects.

Another commented that "Nothing with our own projects - but with developers, the "Consent" process does not (yet) provide for Safety Audit"

Finally, one Council replied: "This is a loaded question with the obvious response being "funding". Our policy is to safety audit only those projects which are likely to benefit from this procedure."

Thus the limitation is largely funding and available staff time, although a number of other minor issues were mentioned. These included lack of appreciation of the importance of safety auditing and lack of its application to the Resource Consent process.

More than one reason was given by some Councils, resulting in more than 25 reasons.



5.6 Other Comments from those Councils which do Safety Audits

Question 8. Do you have any other comments to make on safety auditing?

One Council suggested that it was "important for staff to gain an appreciation of safety issues to incorporate them into designs". Another suggested that safety audits are a 'valuable tool', but they should be done by staff which are outside the authority being audited.

The relationship between Safety Audits and cost of the recommendations was mentioned. "The process highlights the real differences between text book answers and practical solutions where compromises due to budget and local factors must be taken into account."

One Council suggested that Transit New Zealand should be more pro-active arranging more seminars and training.

Another suggested that safety auditing will only be undertaken fully if it is made mandatory or more emphasis is placed on it. Justifications of the benefits would be needed to make this happen.



6. Responses from those Councils which DO NOT undertake Safety Audits

6.1 Why Safety Audits are not done

Question 9. Why are safety audits of your roading projects not done for your Council?

The responses are shown below in Table 10.

Table 10: Why safety audits are not done

Response	Number
No roading projects considered big enough (or no construction at all)	26
Lack of funds, staff resources or time to undertake safety audits, or	16
Not identified as a priority	2
It is not mandatory	2
Extra time delay, in a short design process	1
Procedures not known to staff	1
Safety awareness is part of our design protocol	1
	49

Most Councils gave one of two reasons for not undertaking safety audits:

Lack of funds, staff resources or time to undertake safety audits, or No roading projects considered big enough (or no construction at all)

(Safety audit is a 'professional service' just like any other sort of investigation, and the cost is eligible for financial assistance.)

One Council suggested that the procedures were not known to its staff, while another suggested that safety auditing was not identified as a priority.

Two Councils commented that as it was not mandatory for safety audits to be done, they didn't do them.

Some Councils gave more than one response.

The lack of projects considered appropriate for safety auditing leads to the table on the next page.



6.2 Lack of Projects Considered Appropriate for Safety Auditing

From the previous table (Table 10), it can be seen that 26 Councils do not consider they have projects are appropriate for safety auditing.

Combining Tables 1 and 10, the following result is obtained:

Table 11: Uptake of Safety Audit among New Zealand Councils

Response	Number
No projects suitable for safety auditing	26
Do safety audit	25
Do not do safety audits	23
Total	74

The split is very even - with those Councils indicating that they consider they have no projects suitable for safety auditing just exceeding the other two groups.



6.3 How could your Council be Persuaded to undertake Safety Audits

Question 10. How could Transit New Zealand persuade your Council to arrange safety audits of a proportion of its roading projects?

The responses are shown below in Table 12.

Table 12: How would Council be persuaded to undertake safety audits

Response	Number
Supply funding for Safety Audits	22
More projects	6
Provide reasons why Safety Audits are needed	4
We plan to do Safety Audits	3
More trials with three TLAs and TNZ provided leader	2
Where appropriate, it will be done	2
Give information on available auditors	1
Make it compulsory	1
No reply	8
	49

Just under half the respondents suggested that special funding was needed for Safety Audits. A further six suggested that more roading projects were needed to allow Safety Audits to proceed.

Three respondents said that they plan to do safety auditing, while two others wanted more TNZ led Safety Audits, with adjacent Councils providing staff and Transit New Zealand providing the team leader.

Only one respondent suggested that Safety Auditing should be made compulsory.



6.4 Comments on the TNZ Safety Audit Procedure

Question 11. Do you have any comments to make about the Transit New Zealand safety auditing procedure?

The responses are shown below in Table 13.

Table 13: Comments on TNZ Safety Audit Procedure

Response	Number
Positive	
Worthwhile, satisfactory	17
Would like to see existing networks audited	2
Sub total	19
Negative	
Costly	3
Time consuming	2
More appropriate for large Councils	2
If little or no accident history, extra cost cannot be	1
justified	
Too complex for most local authority applications.	1
Cumbersome procedure which appears to be over-resourced	1
Cost is involved in correcting the identified problems	1
Sub total	11
Neutral	
Would be useful for larger projects with higher traffic	1
volumes	
No comments	18
Sub total	19
Total	49

The largest number of responses (17) were in favour of safety auditing, regarding it as worthwhile or satisfactory. A further two responses would like to see the process extended to auditing existing roads.

Three respondents commented that it was a costly process, and a further two regard it as time consuming. Other negative comments included suggestions that only large Councils should use it, and there is a cost involved in correcting the identified problems.

Among those Councils which do not undertake safety auditing, eighteen respondents had no comment to make on the process.



6.5 Any other comments from Councils which do not do Safety Audits Question 12. Do you have any other comments to make on safety auditing?

The responses are shown below in Table 14.

Table 14: Other comments on Safety Auditing

Response	Number
No comment	27
Positive	
Very worthwhile	7
We intend to carry out a safety audit of our existing roads	1
this year	
Sub total	8
Negative	
Funding is needed	3
Staff time is needed	1
Hard to justify on low volume roads	1
Formal SA on many projects may be overkill	1
Is not compliance with safety procedures adequate?	1
Safety audits more appropriate for large rather than small	1
councils	
Sub total	8
Neutral	
Considering writing own guidelines	1
Need a register of safety auditors	1
Appropriate level of audit needs to be defined	1
Looking at accident savings from safety audits	1
More cost effective to carry out internal audits, with staff	2
independent of the project	
Sub total	6
Total	49

Over half of the respondents had no further comments to make.

The number of positive and negative comments were the same. The negative comments varied, but the largest number referred to the need for funding to do safety audits. Other comments referred to the need for staff to do it, and several suggested that perhaps safety auditing is unnecessary, or only appropriate for larger Councils.

There were also a number of neutral comments, on issues associated with safety auditing.



7. Reliability of Results

Having achieved a 100% response rate, the results are reliable, from a statistical viewpoint.

8. Discussion

The response from the Councils was excellent. After a number of reminder calls, achieving a response from all Councils is most gratifying.

A third of the Councils said that they undertake safety audits, and two thirds said they didn't. The number of Councils undertaking safety audits is reasonably high, considering they are not compulsory and it adds cost to the design process.

Of the 25 Councils undertaking safety audits, five of them audit all their roading projects. 60% of the Councils doing safety audits do half or more of their roading projects, while 40% do less than half.

From the questionnaire it is not possible to be sure that the safety audit procedure is being followed.

Safety audits are done by Council staff, consultants and combinations of these two groups, in similar proportions. Only three Councils use staff from another Council to undertake safety audits.

Almost forty percent of the reasons given by the twenty-five Councils which undertake safety audits suggest that safety audit are undertaken when there is a safety problem. Major projects, and those selected by staff were the next most common reasons.

Transit New Zealand procedures are generally followed during the safety audit process. A comment from one Council throws doubt on whether it undertakes safety audits, as opposed to just a check of the design.

The limiting factor on the number of projects being safety audited is staff time and available funds. The importance of safety auditing was not always appreciated by Councils and others referred to the need for it to be part of the Resource Consent process.

Other comments made by Councils which undertake safety audits included suggesting that TNZ should arrange more seminars and training, while another stated that safety auditing will not become widespread unless it is made mandatory or more emphasis is placed on it. The benefits of safety audit need further justification.



Among the 49 Councils which do not undertake safety audits, 26 cited lack of roading projects or lack of large projects to safety audit as the reason. A further 16 mentioned lack of staff time or funding limitations. Others mentioned lack of staff expertise, limitations of time in the design process and the fact that it is not compulsory.

When allowing for a lack of projects which are considered suitable for safety auditing, about one third of Councils do safety auditing, about one third don't and about a third claim they have no projects suitable for safety auditing.

When asked how they could be persuaded to undertake safety audits, supplying the funding for it was suggested by nearly half the respondents. Others suggested that if there were more roading projects, more safety auditing would be done. Yet others suggested more publicity and training on safety auditing was needed. Only one suggested that it should be made compulsory.

Among those 49 Councils which do not undertake safety auditing, 17 considered it a worthwhile activity. 11 Councils had negative comments to make about it and 18 had no comment to make. The negative comments were largely about the time and cost of the process.

When further comments were sought from the Councils which do not do safety auditing, over half had no further comment to make. Positive comments were made by eight and eight had negative comments to make. These comments varied, but the largest number referred to the need for funding to do safety audits.

Other comments referred to the need for staff to do it, and several suggested that perhaps safety auditing is unnecessary, or only appropriate for larger Councils.



9. Conclusions

It was learned that a third of New Zealand Councils say they undertake safety audits and two thirds do not. The proportion of projects safety audited varies, and only major projects tend to be safety audited. Most follow the TNZ procedures.

Among the Councils which do not do safety audits, the lack of major roading projects was far more important than the availability of funds or staff time. More training or publicity for safety auditing was suggested, with little support for making safety auditing compulsory.

Tony Francis and Associates Limited





Tony Francis and Associates Ltd

Traffic Engineering, Transport Planning, Road Safety and Marketing Research PO Box 122 55, Christchurch Telephone: (03) 3322 722 Fax: (03) 332 8885

	,		
24 May 1996			(SASQue3.doc)
«Title» «Council» «PostAddress1» «City»			
Attention:	«AtFirstName» «AtLastName» «AtJobTitle»		
	Safety Au	ıdit Survey	
many Council	s being conducted to allow a ls undertake safety audits of o encourage them to adopt t	road designs, w	why others do not, and what
Please comple June, 1996.	ete the questionnaire and po	st it back, in the	e enclosed envelope, by 14
questionnaire	t the appropriate person in y , please pass it on to the per ls, after 14 June, will in the	son who is best	able to help. Reminder
Please use a	separate page if there is in	sufficient space	e on the form.
	QUESTI r Council have safety audits audits which Transit New (Please tick one box)		
If 'No' (ie yo	ou do not have safety audit	s done), please	go to question 9.
2. What projectimate are s3. Who does	portion of road improvements afety audited by your County	ts and new cons cil? (Suggest a	percentage)
1	cil staff Other Countinations of the above (Pleas	-	Consultants [

4. How are the projects selected for safety audit?
5. Are the Transit New Zealand procedures ("Safety Audit Policy and
Procedures", 1993) used for your safety audits?
(Please tick one box) No. \(\square\) Yes \(\square\)
6. If 'No', what procedures do you use?
7. What prevents your Council from safety auditing all its roading projects?
8. Do you have any other comments to make on safety auditing?
Thank you. Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope by 14 June, 1996
Thank you. Thease return this questionnante in the chelosed curvope by 14 June, 1990
For Councils NOT having safety audits done: 9. Why are safety audits of your roading projects not done for your Council?
For Councils NOT having safety audits done:
For Councils NOT having safety audits done:
For Councils NOT having safety audits done:
For Councils NOT having safety audits done: 9. Why are safety audits of your roading projects not done for your Council? 10. How could Transit New Zealand persuade your Council to arrange safety audits
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24 May 1996

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«Title» «Council»

«PostAddress1»

«City»

Attention:

«AtFirstName» «AtLastName»

«AtJobTitle»

SAFETY AUDIT SURVEY

Dear «AtFirstName»

Transit New Zealand wishes to establish how many Councils have safety audits done on their road designs, and to encourage more Councils to undertake safety auditing. To do this, Transit New Zealand has engaged the services of Tony Francis and Associates Ltd to conduct a survey.

Safety auditing of road designs is being undertaken by a number of Councils in New Zealand. Transit New Zealand developed a policy "Safety Audit Policy and Procedures" in August 1993.

Your assistance, by completing the attached questionnaire, would be appreciated. Please return it to Tony Francis and Associates Ltd in the enclosed envelope, by 14 June 1996.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Appleton (Dr)
Safety Audit Manager
for Review and Audit Manager

APPENDIX 2

Information on Councils which Undertake Safety Audits

	TD /	337 1 41 64	**
Council	Percentage	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Use
	of projects	audits	TNZ
	audited		standards
Auckland	50	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes
Buller	70	Council staff	No
Central Otago	15	Consultants	Yes
Christchurch	20	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes
Clutha	100	Consultants	Yes
Dunedin	10	Co Staff, Other Co staff & Consultants	Yes
Hamilton	50	Consultants	Yes
Hutt City	95	Council staff	Yes
Invercargill	100	Council staff	Yes
Manawatu	10	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes
Manukau	80	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes
Matamata Piako	25	Consultants	Yes
North Shore	50	Consultants	Yes
Opotiki	50	Council staff	Yes
Rodney	10	Consultants	Yes
Rotorua	100	Council staff	No
Ruapehu	50	Council staff	No
South Waikato	5	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes
Tauranga	20	Co Staff, Other Co staff & Consultants	Yes
Timaru	100	Council staff	No
Upper Hutt	75	Consultants	Yes
Waipa	100	Co Staff, Other Co staff & Consultants	Yes
Waitakere	45	Council staff	Yes
Wellington	10	Council staff	No
Whangarei	70	Co Staff & Consultants	Yes

APPENDIX 3

Actual Responses to Question 7

What prevents your Council from safety auditing all its roading projects? **Q**7

TF	TAT a
Form	No.

Response

Time and cost	
12	Time, cost and justification where improvements are minor
14	Resources to carry out the audit - size of the job and cost also limit this. ie. small minor jobs we would not audit
15	Staff and budget constraints
20	Time and cost. Some smaller projects cannot be justified on time/cost unless there is a concern
30	Staff resources and funding
31	Nothing
32	Probably under-resourced and under-funded, but certainly believe all projects should be audited. Also it is a rather "new" concept
41	Time and cost
59	 Not all new constructions are carried out by Transportation and Traffic Department. Others doing so, eg. roading, property, urban design, Units departments. Lack of incentive and Council policy to audit all projects.
64	Time and manpower may pose a problem. It will also give rise to higher Consultancy Unit (inhouse) fees.
65	Cost, time. However, all are vetted prior to going to tender.
71	Resource in funding and staff
73	The cost
Others Commen	its

18	We only select seal extensions. We assume rehabilitation projects are on roads where black spot studies will have picked up any issues.
21	Only the really little ones (insignificant) are not audited
22	Nothing with our own projects - but with developers, the
0.6	"Consent" process does not (yet) provide for Safety Audit
26	This is a loaded question with the obvious response being
	"funding". Our policy is to safety audit only those projects
	which are likely to benefit from this procedure
61	Lack of appreciation by some of importance of audit process.
	Also, the Provider/Adviser Model does not help.
70	Until my appointment in November 1995, there was little
	understanding of the need for safety audits.

